3 FAH-1 H-2730
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)

3 FAH-1 H-2731 DEFINITIONS

3 FAH-1 H-2731.1 Terminology

3 FAH-1 H-2731.1-1 Primary-A Language

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

A primary-A language is an indigenous language, which is the sole and official national language of the area or an indigenous language, which is used officially on a co-equal basis, either nationally or regionally, with another primary language or a primary-alternate language. Examples are French in Paris, Urdu in Karachi, and Tamil in Madras.

3 FAH-1 H-2731.1-2 Primary-B Language

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

A primary-B language is an indigenous language, which is used by a significant segment of the population but is not used officially by the government. Examples are Lingala or Kituba in Kinshasa, Pashto in Kabul, and Visayan in Cebu.

3 FAH-1 H-2731.1-3 Primary-Alternate Language

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

A primary-alternate language is a non-indigenous language used officially or widely by the government in conducting both internal and foreign affairs and by educated circles whether or not an indigenous language is also used officially or generally by the people. Examples are French in Tunis and English in New Delhi.

3 FAH-1 H-2731.1-4 Secondary Language

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

A secondary language is any language other than a primary language used to communicate with a substantial segment of the population or with a minority group that is politically, economically, or culturally significant. Examples are Chinese in Bangkok, French in Ankara, and Quechua in La Paz.

3 FAH-1 H-2731.1-5 Language-Designated Position (LDP)

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

A language-designated position (LDP) is a position which has been officially designated by the Department *or* USAID as requiring a specified level of language competence on the part of the incumbent.

3 FAH-1 H-2731.1-6 Job-Related Language Training

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

Job-related language training is language training which demonstrably improves the effectiveness of the employee in the employee's present position or in a position to which assignment is pending.

3 FAH-1 H-2731.1-7 Job-Related Proficiency

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

Job-related proficiency is the level of language competence needed to carry out the duties of a given position at a Foreign Service post, whether or not it is a language-designated position (see 3 FAH-1 H-2731.1-5). For LDPs, job-level proficiency is defined as the level at which the position is officially designated. Except for language-designated positions, job-level proficiency is determined at each post by responsible officers in consultation with the regional language supervisor.

3 FAH-1 H-2731.1-8 Officer

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

The term "officer" includes Foreign Service officer (FSO) and Foreign Service specialists in classes FP-7 through 1.

3 FAH-1 H-2731.1-9 Officer With Language Limitation

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

An officer with language limitation is an officer who may receive only one promotion pending satisfaction of the minimum language proficiency qualification.

3 FAH-1 H-2731.1-10 Tested Language Proficiency

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

Tested language proficiency is a rating, according to the rating scales of 3 FAH-1 H-2731.2, given by an examiner certified by M/FSI to give ratings in official M/FSI tests and officially recorded by the M/FSI Language Testing Unit.

3 FAH-1 H-2731.2 Rating Scales

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

To be able to speak in quantitative terms about foreign language proficiency, the Department and other agencies have adopted "base levels" for skill in speaking (S-0 through S-5) and reading (R-0 through R-5) with definitions as listed below. Each level includes the skills covered in all lower levels. The "plus level" (+) designation is assigned when proficiency substantially exceeds one base skill level and does not fully meet the criteria for the next base level. The "plus level" descriptions are, therefore, supplementary to the "base level" descriptions.

3 FAH-1 H2731.2-1 Speaking Proficiency

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

(1)   **S-0, No Practical Speaking Proficiency**—Is unable to function in the spoken language. Oral production is limited to occasional isolated words. Has essentially no communicative ability.

(2)   **S-0+, Memorized Proficiency**—Is able to satisfy immediate needs using rehearsed utterances. Shows little real autonomy of expression, flexibility, or spontaneity. Can ask questions or make statements with reasonable accuracy only with memorized utterances or formulae. Attempts at creating speech are usually unsuccessful. The individual's vocabulary is usually limited to areas of immediate survival needs. An individual can usually differentiate between most significant sounds when produced in isolation, but when combined in words or groups of words, errors ma be frequent. Even with repetition, communication is severely limited with people who are used to dealing with foreigners. Stress, intonation, tone, etc., are usually quite faulty.

(3)   **S-1, Elementary Proficiency**—Is able to satisfy minimum courtesy requirements and maintain very simple face-to-face conversations on familiar topics. A native speaker must often use slowed speech, repetition, paraphrase, or a combination of these to be understood by an individual with an S-1 proficiency. Similarly, the native speaker must strain and employ real-world knowledge to understand simple statements or questions from this individual. This speaker has a functional, but limited proficiency. Although misunderstandings are frequent, the individual is able to ask for help and to verify comprehension of native speech in face-to-face interaction. The individual is unable to produce continuous discourse except with rehearsed material.

(4)   **S-1+ Elementary Proficiency, Plus**—Can initiate and maintain predictable face-to-face conversations and satisfy limited social demands. However, he or she may have little understanding of the social conventions of conversation. The interlocutor is, generally, required to strain and employ real-world knowledge to understand some simple speech. The speaker, at this level, may hesitate and may have to change subjects due to lack of language resources. Range and control of the languages are limited. Speech largely consists of a series of short, discrete utterances.

(5)   **S-2, Limited Working Proficiency—**Is able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle routine work-related interactions that are limited in scope. In more complex and sophisticated work-related tasks, language usage, generally, disturbs the native speaker. Can handle with confidence, but not with facility, most normal, high-frequency social conversational situations including extensive, but casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information. The individual gets the gist of most everyday conversations, but has some difficulty understanding native speakers in situations that require specialized or sophisticated knowledge. The individual's utterances are minimally cohesive. Linguistic structure is usually not very elaborate and not thoroughly controlled; errors are frequent. Vocabulary use is appropriate for high-frequency utterances, but unusual or imprecise elsewhere.

(6)   **S-2+ Limited Working Proficiency, Plus—**Is able to satisfy most work requirements with language usage that is often, but not always, acceptable and effective. The individual shows considerable ability to communicate effectively on topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows a high degree of fluency and ease of speech, yet when under tension or pressure, his or her ability to use the language effectively may deteriorate. Comprehension of normal native speech is typically near complete. The individual may miss cultural and local references and may require a native speaker to adjust to his or her limitations in some ways. Native speakers often perceive the individual's speech to contain awkward or inaccurate phrasing of ideas, mistaken time, space, and person references, or to be in some way inappropriate, if not strictly incorrect.

(7)   **S-3, General Professional Proficiency—**Is able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary, in order to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Nevertheless, the individual's limitations, generally, restrict the professional contexts of language use to matters of shared knowledge and/or international convention. Discourse is cohesive. The individual uses the language acceptably, but with some noticeable imperfections; yet errors virtually never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker. The individual can effectively combine structure and vocabulary to convey his or her meaning accurately. The individual speaks readily and fills pauses suitably. In face-to-face conversation with natives speaking the standard dialect at a normal rate of speech, comprehension is quite complete. Although cultural references, proverbs, and the implications of nuances and idiom may not be fully understood, the individual can easily repair the conversation. Pronunciation may be obviously foreign. Individual sounds are accurate; but stress, intonation, and pitch control may be faulty.

(8)   **S-3+ General Professional Proficiency, Plus**—Is often able to use the language to satisfy professional needs in a wide range of sophisticated and demanding tasks. Despite obvious strengths, may exhibit some hesitancy, uncertainty, effort, or errors which limit the range of language-use tasks that can be reliably performed. Typically, there is particular strength in fluency and one or more, but not all, of the following: breadth of lexicon, including low- and medium-frequency items, especially socio-linguistic/cultural references and nuances of close synonyms; structural precision, with sophisticated features that are readily, accurately, and appropriately controlled (such as complex modification and embedding in Indo-European languages); discourse competence in a wide range of contexts and tasks, often matching a native speaker's strategic and organizational abilities and expectations. Occasional patterned errors occur in low frequency and highly complex structures.

(9)   **S-4 Advanced Professional Proficiency**—Is able to use the language fluently and accurately on all levels, normally, pertinent to professional needs. The individual's language usage and ability to function are fully successful. Organizes discourse well, using appropriate rhetorical speech devices, native cultural references, and understanding. Language ability only rarely hinders him or her in performing any task requiring language; yet, the individual would seldom be perceived as a native. Speaks effortlessly and smoothly, and is able to use the language with a high degree of effectiveness, reliability, and precision for all representational purposes within the range of personal and professional experience and scope of responsibilities. Can serve as an informal interpreter in a range of unpredictable circumstances. Can perform extensive, sophisticated language tasks, encompassing most matters of interest to well-educated native speakers, including tasks which do not bear directly on a professional specialty.

(10) **S-4+ Advanced Professional Proficiency, Plus**

Speaking proficiency is regularly superior in all respects, usually equivalent to that of a well-educated, highly articulate native speaker. Language ability does not impede the performance of any language-use task. However, the individual would not necessarily be perceived as culturally native.

(11) **S-5 Native or Bilingual Proficiency**—Speaking proficiency is functionally equivalent to that of a highly articulate well-educated native speaker and reflects the cultural standards of the country where the language is natively spoken. The individual uses the language with complete flexibility and intuition, so that speech on all levels is fully accepted by well-educated native speakers in all of its features, including breadth of vocabulary and idiom, colloquialisms, and pertinent cultural references. Pronunciation is typically consistent with that of well-educated native speakers of a non-stigmatized dialect.

3 FAH-1 H-2731.2-2 Reading Proficiency

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

(1) **R-0 No Practical Reading Proficiency**—Has no practical reading proficiency.

(2) **R-0+ Memorized Proficiency**—Can recognize all the letters in the printed version of an alphabetic system and high-frequency elements of a syllabary or a character system. Is able to read some or all of the following: numbers, isolated words and phrases, personal and place names, street signs, and/or office and shop designations; the above is often interpreted inaccurately. Unable to read connected prose.

(3) **R-1 Elementary Proficiency**—Has sufficient comprehension to read very simply connected written material in a form equivalent to usual printing or typescript. Can read either representations of familiar formulaic verbal exchanges or simple language containing only the highest frequency structural patterns and vocabulary, including shared international vocabulary items and cognates (when appropriate). Is able to read and understand known language elements that have been recombined in new ways to achieve different meanings at a similar level of simplicity. Texts may include simple narratives of routine behavior; highly predictable descriptions of people, places, or things; and explanations of geography and government such as those simplified for tourists. Some misunderstandings are possible on simple texts. Can get some main ideas and locate prominent items of professional significance in more complex texts. Can identify general subject matter in some authentic texts.

(4) **R-1+ Elementary Proficiency, Plus**—Has sufficient comprehension to understand simple discourse in printed form for informative social purposes. Can read material such as announcements of public events, simple prose containing biographical information or narration of events, and straightforward newspaper headlines. Can guess at unfamiliar vocabulary if highly contextualized, but has difficulty with unfamiliar contexts. Can get some main ideas and locate routine information of professional significance in more complex texts. Can follow essential points of written discussion at an elementary level on topics in his or her special professional field.

(5)   **R-2 Limited Working Proficiency**—Has sufficient comprehension to read simple, authentic written material in a form equivalent to usual printing or typescript on subjects within a familiar context. Is able to read with some misunderstandings straightforward, familiar, factual material, but in general, insufficiently experienced with the language to draw inferences directly from the linguistic aspects of the text. Can locate and understand the main ideas and details in material written for the general reader. However, persons who have professional knowledge of a subject may be able to summarize or perform sorting and locating tasks with written texts that are well beyond their general proficiency level. The individual can read uncomplicated, but authentic prose on familiar subjects that are normally presented in a predictable sequence which aids the reader in understanding the prose.

Texts may include descriptions and narration in contexts such as news items describing frequently occurring events, simple biographical information, social notices, formulaic business letters, and simple technical material written for the general reader. Generally, the prose that can be read by the individual is predominantly in straightforward or high frequency sentence patterns. The individual does not have a broad active vocabulary, but is able to use contextual and real-world cues to understand the text. Characteristically, however, the individual is quite slow in performing such a process. He or she is typically able to answer factual questions about authentic texts of the types described above.

(6)   **R-2+ Limited Working Proficiency, Plus**—Has sufficient comprehension to understand most factual material in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special professional interests. Is markedly more proficient at reading materials on a familiar topic. Is able to separate the main ideas and details from lesser ones and uses that distinction to advance his or her understanding of the material. The individual is able to use linguistic context and real-world knowledge to make sensible guesses about unfamiliar material. Has a broad active reading vocabulary. The individual gets the gist of main and subsidiary ideas in texts which could only be read thoroughly by persons with much higher proficiencies. Weaknesses include slowness, uncertainty, and inability to discern nuance and/or intentionally disguised meaning.

(7)   **R-3 General Professional Proficiency—**Is able to read within a normal range of speed and with almost complete comprehension a variety of authentic prose material on unfamiliar subjects. Reading ability is not dependent on subject matter knowledge, although it is not expected that the individual can comprehend thoroughly subject matter which is highly dependent on cultural knowledge or which is outside his or her general experience and not accompanied by explanation. Text-types include news stories similar to wire service reports or international news items in major periodicals, routine correspondence, general reports, and technical material in his or her professional field; all of these may include hypothesis, argumentation, and supported opinions. Misreading is rare. Is almost always able to interpret material correctly, relate ideas, and "read between the lines" (that is, he or she understands the writers' implicit intents in texts of the above types). He or she gets the gist of more sophisticated texts, but may be unable to detect or understand subtlety and nuance. Rarely has to pause over or reread general vocabulary. However, may experience some difficulty with unusually complex structure and low frequency idioms.

(8)   **R-3+ General Professional Proficiency, Plus—**Can comprehend a variety of styles and forms pertinent to professional needs. Rarely misinterprets such texts, or rarely experiences difficulty relating ideas or making inferences. Is able to comprehend many social linguistic and cultural references. However, may miss some nuances and subtleties. Is able to comprehend a considerable range of intentionally complex structures, low frequency idioms, and uncommon connotative intentions; however, accuracy is not complete. The individual is typically able to read with facility, understand, and appreciate contemporary expository, technical, or literary texts which do not rely heavily on slang and unusual idioms.

(9)   **R-4 Advanced Professional Proficiency—**Is able to read fluently and accurately all styles and forms of the language pertinent to professional needs. The individual's experience with the written language is extensive enough that he or she is able to relate inferences in the text to real-world knowledge and understand almost all social linguistic and cultural references. Is able to "read beyond the lines" (that is, to understand the full ramifications of texts as they are situated in the wider cultural, political, or social environment). Is able to read and understand the intent of writers' use of nuance and subtlety. The individual can discern relationships among sophisticated written materials in the context of broad experience. Can follow unpredictable turns of thought readily in, for example, editorial, conjectural, and literary texts in any subject matter area directed to the general reader. Can read essentially all materials in his or her special field, including official and professional documents and correspondence. Recognizes all professionally relevant vocabularies known to the educated non-professional native, although he or she may have some difficulty with slang. Can read reasonably legible handwriting without difficulty. Accuracy is often nearly that of a well-educated native reader.

(10) **R-4+ Advanced Professional Proficiency, Plus—**Has a nearly native ability to read and understand extremely difficult or abstract prose, a very wide variety of vocabulary, idioms, colloquialisms, and slang. Has a strong sensitivity to and understanding of sociolinguistic and cultural references. Has little difficulty in reading less than fully legible handwriting. Has a broad ability to "read beyond the lines" (that is, to understand the full ramifications of texts as they are situated in the wider cultural, political, or social environment) and is nearly that of a well-read or well-educated native reader. Accuracy is close to that of the well-educated native reader, but not equivalent.

(11) **R-5 Functionally Native Proficiency—**Reading proficiency is functionally equivalent to that of the well-educated native reader. Can read extremely difficult and abstract prose; for example, general legal and technical as well as highly colloquial writings. Is able to read literary texts, typically including contemporary avant-garde prose, poetry, and theatrical writings. Can read classical or archaic forms of literature with the same degree of facility as the well-educated but non-specialist native. Reads and understands a wide variety of vocabulary and idioms, colloquialisms, slang, and pertinent cultural references. With varying degrees of difficulty, can read all kinds of handwritten documents. Accuracy of comprehension is equivalent to that of a well-educated native reader.

(12) **R-N No Writing System Pertinent to the Needs of the Service—**M/FSI gives a score to certify that no writing system pertinent to the needs of the Foreign Service exists or that knowledge of the writing system is not pertinent to the needs of the Service. R-N would occur, for example, in a Somali rating.

3 FAH-1 H-2732 LANGUAGE TRAINING FOR ASSIGNMENTS

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

Note: See USAID ADS (Automated Directives Systems) 458.5. See 3 FAH-1 H-2731.2 for base level language and reading rating scales.

3 FAH-1 H-2732.1 Training for Language Designated Positions (LDPs)

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a. An employee assigned to a language designated position (LDP) who does not possess the required tested level of language proficiency shall be assigned for a suitable length of language training to enable the employee to gain the proficiency prior to assumption of duties at post.

b. If the required level of competence is not attained at the end of the language training period, the employee is expected to continue training at the post at the highest level of intensity consistent with the requirements of the job and the availability of geographic bureau funds until the designated proficiency is reached.

c. In determining whether an employee has the language qualifications for an LDP, test scores have the following periods of validity, counted from the date of the test to the estimated date of arrival at post.

Tested Proficiency	Duration of Validity
S-3+/R-3+ or below	five years
S-4/R-4 or above	indefinite

d. An employee who has previously scored at the proficiency level required by the prospective position but whose test date is past the duration of validity to meet the above (see 3 FAH-1 H-2732 paragraph c) criteria shall be retested. If proficiency has fallen below that required level, the employee shall be given a refresher course of study to assist in recovering the previous competence prior to arrival at post.

3 FAH-1 H-2732.2 Non-Language-Designated Positions

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a. Every officer assigned to a post where French or Spanish is a primary language, shall, insofar as practicable, have a tested proficiency of at least S-2/R-2 in such language or undergo intensive training to bring the officer as close to S-2/R-2 proficiency as circumstances permit before assumption of duties at the post.

b.   The requirement of 3 FAH-1 H-2732.2 paragraph a is equally applicable where one of the languages listed in the same paragraph serves as the primary-alternate language of the post, if the officer is not already proficient or assigned to training in the primary language.

3 FAH-1 H-2732.3 Members on First Field Assignment

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a.   Any new member of the Foreign Service of classes *FS-6* through FS-4, whose first field assignment is to a *language designated position* where a Category A language (see 3 FAH-1 H-2732 Exhibit H-2732.3) is primary, shall normally receive training before assumption of duties at the post, if the member does not have a tested proficiency of at least S-3/R-3 in the language.

(**Note:** The remainder of this subchapter does not apply to USAID. See USAID Handbook 28, chapter 4.) If tested proficiency is less than S-1, the training should be for up to 18 weeks. If tested proficiency is S-1 or S-1+, the training should be for up to 16 weeks. If tested proficiency is S-2 or S-2+, the training should be from eight to 12 weeks. If the officer's first field assignment is to a post where any other language is primary and the officer does not have a tested proficiency of at least S-2/R-2 in the language or an S-3/R-3 in the primary-alternate language of the post, the officer shall normally receive up to 24 weeks of training (depending on the language and previous knowledge of that language). Normally, a primary language will take precedence over the primary-alternate language.

b.   Officers with language limitation (see 3 FAH-1 H-2731.1-9, whose first assignment is to Washington or to a post where English is a primary-A may be considered for language training before the assignment only if such training will meet Foreign Service needs or substantially assist the individual officer. In cases where such training has not been given and the officer has not been removed from probation, a second assignment will not be made without provision for language training.

3 FAH-1 H-2732.4 Foreign Service Staff Personnel

(TL:POH-083; 07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

Foreign Service staff personnel in non-language-designated positions shall be given the opportunity for language training to the extent possible. In particular, secretaries to principal officers, deputy chiefs of mission, and public affairs officers shall, whenever possible, be given a minimum of eight weeks of language training if they do not already possess at least a tested S-2 proficiency in the language. This assumes even greater importance when such personnel are assigned to posts where Foreign Service National employees do not speak adequate English.

3 FAH-1 H-2732.5 Personnel Without Proficiency in a Primary Language

(TL:POH-083; 07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a.   Every employee assigned to a post where a Category A language is a primary language and who does not have an "elementary" or "courtesy" level of proficiency (S-1) in the appropriate language will, to the maximum practical extent, be given at least eight weeks of full-time training before departure for post.

b.   Every employee who does not have a "courtesy" level of proficiency in a primary language of post of assignment and who is not given training before arrival at the post will be expected to undertake a M/FSI-approved self-study program or as much live instruction as the resources of the geographic bureau permit.

3 FAH-1 H-2733 LANGUAGE TESTING

3 FAH-1 H-2733.1 Updating Test Scores

(TL:POH-083; 07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a.   The Language Skills Inventory, which is a list of M/FSI test scores, is the sole source of language information used in making assignments to designated positions. Only scores less than five years old will be considered valid if below S-4/R-4 (see 3 FAH-1 H-2732.1 paragraph c). The Language Skills Inventory lists each employee's highest score as well as his or her most recent score. Recent scores, even if they are lower, are valuable in determining how much refresher training might be necessary to bring the officer up to the required level. Therefore, it is to the advantage of officers to present themselves from time to time for retesting in all languages in which they have some proficiency. This will provide the Department and USAID with the timely language skill information they need in making foreign assignments and to keep the officers competitive for language-designated positions.

b.   Retesting is not required in a language in which an employee has previously achieved a M/FSI-tested proficiency of S-4/R-4 or better.

c.   Normally, tests will be given after six months or 100 hours of instruction.

3 FAH-1 H-2733.2 M/FSI Tests in the Field

(TL:POH-083; 07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a.   Official M/FSI language proficiency tests in the field are authorized by M/FSI/Washington or by one of its field representatives, in consultation with appropriate authorities at post, when one of the following criteria is met:

(1) A test in the field is demonstrably beneficial to the U.S. Government. For example, when the Department or USAID requires current information for a decision on direct transfer of the candidate to a position in which the language is needed and when information is needed on the current proficiency of an occupant, or a potential occupant, of a language-designated position; or

(2) Postponement of a language test until the employee's next consultation in Washington would result in personal hardship. For example, when removal of language limitation for promotion of a junior officer or lateral entrant or the award of an incentive salary increase is at stake and when an officer is transferred directly out of the language area and wishes to record a possible maximum proficiency.

b. Normally, such tests will not be given less than six months after any previous M/FSI test in the same language nor within six months of anticipated home leave, except when an incentive salary increase (see 3 FAH-1 H 2733 Exhibit H-2733.2) or removal of language limitation for promotion is at stake.

c. M/FSI tests may be given abroad; in other cases, only upon specific authorization by M/FSI/Washington and USAID.

3 FAH-1 H-2734 LANGUAGE TRAINING AT M/FSI/WASHINGTON

3 FAH-1 H-2734.1 Types of Training Offered

3 FAH-1 H-2734.1-1 Intensive Language Training

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

M/FSI conducts language training in Washington primarily as intensive full-time training, in order to make maximum use of the time available for training. Normally, students assigned to the Institute for full-time language study are relieved of all other duties for the duration of their language training. Only emergency situations are permitted to interrupt or shorten language-training assignments.

3 FAH-1 H-2734.1-2 Early Morning Classes

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

As a convenience for employees during Washington assignments, M/FSI also conducts early morning classes. Such classes meet before the normal workday Monday through Friday (8:15-5:00PM) from October to June and are open to members of the Foreign Service and to other employees with a specific job-related need for the language.

3 FAH-1 H-2734.2 Selection of Students for Language Training

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

M/FSI provides language aptitude testing and counseling to assist offices and agencies in the selection of suitable candidates. While there is no hard-and-fast rule, scores on the MLAT of 60 or better are usually evidence that an employee is capable of doing acceptable work in a Category-B language. Similarly, candidates with MLAT scores of 50 or better are normally able to succeed in Category-A language training. A record of success in previous language training as an adult is usually a favorable indication regardless of the MLAT score. A person with a low MLAT score and no previous success in language learning is a doubtful prospect. M/FSI does not automatically exclude such persons from training, but agencies or offices assigning such students should be prepared to withdraw them and make other arrangements if, early in the course, it becomes evident that success is not likely.

3 FAH-1 H-2734.3 Assignment Procedures

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

Students for regularly scheduled intensive language courses may be assigned for the full course to commence training on dates published in the M/FSI Schedule of Courses. A Form DS-755, *Request for Training*, should be received by M/FSI at least two weeks prior to of the scheduled course to ensure inclusion in a projected class.

3 FAH-1 H-2734.3-1 Form DS-755

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

The Form DS-755 forwarded to M/FSI should include, under "Remarks," a specification of the level of language competence required, if the employee is assigned to a language-designated position. For all specially arranged training, a note indicating when and with whom the special arrangement was made. Billing procedures require that each student, in order to be admitted to class, have a Form DS-755 properly filled out by the assigning office with appropriate signatures.

3 FAH-1 H-2734.3-2 Specially Arranged Training

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

Training must be specially arranged in the following circumstances:

(1) The candidate already has some proficiency in the language;

(2) Training is to be scheduled for less than the full course;

(3) The candidate is to study a language or to start on a date not listed in the Schedule of Courses; and/or

(4) The Form DS-755 is not able to reach M/FSI two weeks before the training starts.

3 FAH-1 H-2735 LANGUAGE TRAINING AT POST

3 FAH-1 H2735.1 Responsibilities

3 FAH-1 H-2735.1-1 Principal Officer Responsibilities

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

The principal officer has the following responsibilities:

(1) To establish and administer, in consultation with the chief officer of each participating agency and the regional language supervisor, if any, such foreign language training as may be necessary or desirable and practicable to meet the needs of the post and of the participating agencies, subject to the provisions of these regulations. Implicit in this responsibility is the judicious use of time and funds devoted to language training;

(2) To be familiar with the language-designated positions (LDPs) at post and the degree to which the post is in compliance with the provisions of the Foreign Service Act regarding LDPs;

(3) To insure that the interest and effort of individual employees in job-related language learning are adequately reflected in performance evaluations. Such indications should be included as part of the work requirements statement and discussed with the employee at the beginning of the rating period. To insure, in cases where an employee occupying an LDP has less than the proficiency required by the position, that the;

(a) Employee's supervisor will include progress toward achievement of the required proficiency in the definition of duties prepared at the beginning of a rating period;

(b) Employee's performance in meeting these goals is reflected in the employee's performance evaluation; and

(c) The supervisors give all practicable support to the employee's efforts to improve proficiency.

(4) To designate a post language officer (PLO) who is responsible for the local administration of the post's language program. To insure that the post language officer is invested with adequate authority to make the necessary decisions and is given sufficient time to carry out the related duties. The principal officer is responsible for insuring that the PLO is appropriately evaluated in the annual performance rating. Desirable qualifications for the post language officer include:

(a) Administrative experience;

(b) Previous intensive language training at M/FSI; and

(c) An S-3/R-3 proficiency in the language of the post.

3 FAH-1 H-2735.1-2 Post Language Officer (PLO) Responsibilities

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

Upon authority of the principal officer, the post language officer (PLO) has the following responsibilities:

(1) To formulate and carry out plans for a single, fully coordinated language training program to meet the needs of all participating agencies;

(2) To establish new classes;

(3) To assign students to appropriate classes and make such changes to assignments as may be necessary;

(4) To control:

(a) Instruction schedules for all components of the post language program, under the guidelines for intensity, course length, and attendance requirements established by these regulations;

(b) To terminate training when the PLO determines that it has become ineffective or inappropriate; and

(c) To establish priorities for access to post language program training in the event of shortage of funds, using the guidelines set forth in these regulations.

(5) To supervise classes to the extent that time and competence permit;

(6) To maintain records of attendance, progress of students, and work hours of instructors;

(7) Through established administrative channels at the post:

(a) To select and train candidates for instructor positions, with the assistance of the regional language supervisor when available;

(b) To arrange for employment of instructors and serve as their supervisor;

(c) To procure and maintain, for the benefit of all participating agencies, classrooms, furnishings, and teaching equipment including textbooks, tape recorders, and language tapes; and

(d) To account for teaching equipment loaned to personnel; and

(8) To takes such other actions as may contribute to the economical and effective operations of the post language program.

3 FAH-1 H-2735.1-3 Local Control Officer

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

When one or more components of the post language program are geographically separated from the central administration of the program, a local control officer is designated for each such component, but overall coordination and reporting continue to be centralized under the authority delegated by the principal officer to the post language officer.

3 FAH-1 H-2735.2 Instruction

3 FAH-1 H-2735.2-1 Purposes of and Priorities of Instruction

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a.   Posts may establish language classes only for one of the purposes shown below. These purposes are listed in order of priority. Training at a post may not be authorized for any of those purposes unless all requirements for training of higher priority have been met.

(1) **Priority 1**: To assist personnel occupying LDPs (see 3 FAM 2732) in enhancing language proficiency.

(2) **Priority 2**: To assist other personnel in achieving job-level proficiency (see 3 FAH-1 H-2735.2-1 paragraphs b and c below).

(3) **Priority 3**: To assist officers with language limitation in achieving the qualifying level in a primary or primary-alternate language of the post. In unusual cases, officers with language limitation may receive instruction in a language not otherwise authorized at the post upon prior approval by M/FSI/Washington.

(4) **Priority 4**: To assist personnel in meeting general assignment-related needs by attaining a "courtesy" level of proficiency in a primary or primary-alternate language in accordance with the policies stated in 3 FAH-1 H-2732.5 and with section 702 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended (see 3 FAM 2731.2).

(5) **Priority 5:** To assist adult family members of eligible employees, to the extent that funds permit, in attaining sufficient proficiency in a primary or primary-alternate language to enable them to participate in community and representational activities (see 3 FAH-1 H-2735.2-2 paragraph b; see also section 704(c) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended).

b.   In general, priority will vary directly with the amount of time remaining in an employee's tenure at post; that is, recent arrivals have the highest priority and those approaching transfer will have the lowest priority. Normally, persons within six months of transfer will have lower priority.

c.   There may be cases in which the employing agency has not established proficiency levels required for particular jobs, and it is necessary to apply the above priorities. The post language officer in consultation with the regional language supervisor, when available, and local agency heads and section chiefs, shall determine the proficiency level required.

3 FAH-1 H-2735.2-2 Employee Eligibility

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a.   To be eligible for enrollment in post language programs, persons must be U.S. citizens assigned or detailed as direct payroll employees of the Department or of a U.S. Government agency with which the Department has a reimbursement agreement for language training, or adult members of the families of eligible employees (see 3 FAH-1 H-2742 paragraph b for definition of "adult"). Unless otherwise notified, posts may assume that satisfactory agreements are in force for all agencies for which training is projected in the annual budget request.

b.   Contract employees of the U.S. Government are eligible for enrollment in post language training programs only if the contract for their employment specifies that language training may be provided at U.S. Government expense. Adult family members of contract employees may receive language training only if so specified in the contract.

3 FAH-1 H-2735.2-3 Family Eligibility

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

It is the intention of the Department, USAID, and other participating agencies to meet the valid language training needs of adult members of eligible employees' families abroad. Eligible members of families may participate on the same basis as employees subject to such limitation as may be applied by the funding agency and by the following provisions:

(1) When limitations of funds at the post make it necessary for the post to choose between providing instruction for eligible employees and for eligible family members, priority shall be given to employed personnel, in accordance with the priorities stated in 3 FAH-1 H-2735.2-1 paragraphs a and b above;

(2) All eligible family members who have no proficiency in an appropriate language upon arrival at post are encouraged to complete 100 hours of training in a primary language of the post of assignment subject to availability of funds;

(3) The post is authorized to extend training up to a total of 240 hours for those family members who have satisfactorily completed 100 hours of instruction, and who have a need for a higher proficiency in a primary language of the post to meet representational requirements and to participate in community activities; and

(4) Separate classes may be established for family members where it is impractical to combine them with employee students and where it is clearly in the interest of training effectiveness. However, training shall not be authorized for the sole purpose of convenience or as a right associated with rank.

3 FAH-1 H-2735.2-4 Attendance Requirements and Termination of Training

(TL:POH-083; 07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a. Sustained effort and progress in language work are essential to maintenance of eligibility for further instruction. To remain eligible for instruction, personnel must maintain an average attendance of at least 90 percent of the scheduled hours of individual instruction, or at least 80 percent in the case of group instruction, excluding absences due to leave, official travel status, or sickness.

b. A scheduled hour of instruction is an hour for which an instructor is paid to teach the class. Personnel receiving individual instruction must notify instructors and/or post language officers not later than the day preceding a predictable absence, so that the time may be deleted from the instructor's work schedule or utilized otherwise in post language program activities.

c. When the number of eligible employees or family members actively participating in any class falls below three, the class shall be discontinued or combined with other classes no later than the end of the quarter in which the shortage occurs. Then, in consultation with the principal officer, heads of other participating agencies, or the post language officer, language instruction at U.S. Government expense for any student in the language training program does not clearly serve to satisfy a policy set forth herein, the participation of the student is to be discontinued immediately.

3 FAH-1 H-2735.2-5 Conduct of Training

(TL:POH-083; 07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a. **Size of Classes—**Normally, language instruction at field posts is to be authorized only for groups comprising at least three eligible participants and not more than six in all. Up to eight may be enrolled temporarily to meet emergency situations.

b. **Class Frequency**—A minimum of five class hours a week shall normally be required, except at the intermediate and advanced levels, when a minimum of three hours a week may be scheduled.

c. **Place and Time of Classes**—Classes will be conducted at the location and time most convenient to the largest number of all eligible participants, regardless of their sponsoring agency. When this is impractical because of the location of activities at the post or because some personnel are stationed away from the post, separate classes may be organized at other locations under supervision of a local control officer. Classes may not be set up in private residences unless specific arrangements for time and attendance control and adequate supervision are assured by the post language officer.

d. **Individual Tutoring May be Authorized When:**

(1) An employee with a job-related need for training or an officer with language limitation cannot be grouped with other students because of differences in language proficiency level, or because the employee's duties conflict with class schedules, principal officers may authorize individual instruction for as long as these conditions prevail. If instruction in classes or groups of two is feasible, it takes precedence over individual instruction; and

(2) Personnel who are stationed away from the post qualify for individual instruction, such training should be authorized, budgeted, and reported on the same basis as training at the post.

(3) Individual tutoring may not be authorized solely for the convenience of the employee or as a right associated with rank.

e**. Accelerated Training for New Arrivals**—Sporadic class attendance seldom produces a worthwhile result. On-and-off attendance for an hour a day stretched out over several months delays achievement of the purpose for which the training is authorized and, correspondingly, reduces the period during which the outcome is useful to the U.S. Government. To avoid conflicts between language training demands and the demands of other duties and to insure the prescribed minimum attendance (3 FAH-1 H-2735.2-2 paragraph c), it is strongly recommended that training be concentrated at the beginning of the tour of duty.

It is the desire of the Department *and* USAID, that personnel assigned to foreign language posts achieve the minimum proficiency goals (see 3 FAH-1 H-2731.2) as early as possible during their tours. Therefore, the Department *and* USAID encourage any schedule of accelerated training designed to assist newly arrived personnel in achieving these goals expeditiously either during or outside of office hours without undue interference with other normal operations. Both strongly recommend a minimum of two hours of formal class a day until 100 hours of attendance are achieved. Where feasible, posts are authorized to accomplish an initial concentration of training on a full-time basis.

f. **Which Languages—**Training in primary-A and primary-alternate languages will normally take precedence over training in primary-B languages. Training in secondary or any other non-primary languages is not authorized except with prior approval of the principal officer.

Simultaneous training in more than one language must have prior approval of the principal officer.

g. **Authorization—**Expenditure of appropriated funds for language training is justifiable only when it is clearly demonstrable that the training meets a need of the U.S. Government*, and is otherwise legally authorized.*

Except for the specific purposes for which instruction may be authorized (see 3 FAM 2731.3 and 3 FAH-1 H-2735.2-1), no language may be studied at U.S. Government expense which is not useful at the post. Study of a non-primary language may precede attainment of the minimum proficiency goals in one of the primary or primary-alternate languages only in cases where personnel have an immediate need for a higher level of skill in that language to perform their jobs. Such study requires prior approval by the principal officer.

Decisions pertaining to training assignment at post may be made by the principal officer or the chief representatives of other participating agencies where training is less than full-time or full-time for less than 12 weeks (see also 3 FAH-1 H-2735.2-3 paragraph h below).

h. **Full-Time Training—**Designation of Department *or* USAID personnel for full-time language instruction for periods of 12 weeks or more at Foreign Service posts will be made only on personnel actions issued by the Department *or* USAID.

Posts wishing to nominate personnel for full-time language instruction of 12 weeks or longer, at field posts, should address requests to the agency of the nominee showing a clear and immediate need and stating when the employee or employees can be relieved of other duties to participate in training.

i. **Informal Self-Study and Training Materials—**In certain restricted cases, language training materials are provided to posts for use by employees and departments on an informal, self-study basis with the understanding that there is no expense to the U.S. Government other than the cost of these materials. Because of the high costs of preparing and shipping unrestricted quantities of these materials, their issuance is, normally, limited to cases where an immediate job-related need exists. An employee's long-range career interests or unsupported expectation of being assigned to a given language area in the future does not meet this criterion.

(1) Requests from post for self-study materials should include the following information:

(a) The name of the employee requiring materials;

(b) A statement of the job-related need; and

(c) An explanation of the circumstances which make self-study at the post more practical than the usual pattern of a period of intensive training at M/FSI/Washington before proceeding to post.

(2) Language tapes and materials sent to the field should not be returned to M/FSI, but retained in the post's language library for future use. Alternatively, they may be taken by an employee who transfers to a new post, and turned over to that post's language officer for use in that post's language program.

3 FAH-1 H-2735.3 Proficiency Goals

3 FAH-1 H-2735.3-1 Minimum Goals

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

The post language training policy of the Department and USAID is, minimally, satisfied when an employee reaches the level of language proficiency specified above for the employee's grade and position in a primary or primary-alternate language of the post.

3 FAH-1 H-2735.3-2 Beyond Minimum Goals

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

It is the intent of the Department and USAID that officers continue training in a primary or primary-alternate language at the post. The principal officer *is urged to* permit other personnel to continue language learning activities beyond minimum proficiency goals on a space-available basis and to the extent that work schedules and available funds permit.

3 FAH-1 H-2736 REPORTS

3 FAH-1 H-2736.1 Language Training Report Form (DS-651)

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

Normally, a Form DS-651, *Report of Training in Language/Area Skills and Achievements,* shall be prepared upon the completion of long-term, full-time training for significant periods.

3 FAH-1 H-2736.2 Language Proficiency Report Form (DS-1354)

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

The result of any official test, other than a test given at the end of training, shall be submitted by Form DS-1354, *Language Proficiency Report,* to the M/FSI Language Testing Unit. Such official tests shall be administered in the field only with the authorization of M/FSI/Washington, except as specified in 3 FAH-1 H-2733.2.

3 FAH-1 H-2736.3 Report on Foreign Language Competence at Missions

3 FAH-1 H-2736.3-1 Authority

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

Section 304(c) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 requires that within six months after assuming the position, the chief of mission to a foreign country shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report describing the chief of mission's own foreign language competence and the foreign language competence of the mission staff in the principal language or dialect of that country.

3 FAH-1 H-2736.3-2 Purpose

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

This section contains regulations relative to a legal reporting requirement placed upon chiefs of mission concerning their foreign language competence and that of their staffs.

3 FAH-1 H-2736.3-3 Definition

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

"Chief(s) of mission" in this context means the chief of mission to a foreign country, and, in keeping with the intent of the Congress, principal officers of special interest sections, consulates general, and consulates not under the direct supervision of a U.S. diplomatic post.

3 FAH-1 H-2736.3-4 Procedures

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a. Chiefs of mission (as defined above) at posts where English is neither the primary nor primary-alternate language (see 3 FAH-1 H-2731.1) will submit such reports.

b.   The Director General of the Foreign Service (M/DGHR) will remind chiefs of mission of this requirement by telegram approximately four months following their arrival at post.

c.   Reports are to be submitted by telegram to the Director General for transmittal to the respective congressional committees. Chiefs of mission will be responsible for ensuring that such reports reach the Department at least two weeks prior to the six-month date mentioned in the Act.

d.   These reports should be concise but must address separately the language competence of the chief of mission and of the U.S. staff, including personnel of agencies other than the Department of State assigned to the mission and constituent posts, where appropriate. Specific reference to the speaking or reading proficiency rating (whether M/FSI-tested or self-assessed) of the chief of mission,

and of appropriate key members of the staff should be cited. Comments on the use of the post language program as a tool for improving language competence of personnel at post would also be helpful. Reports should be unclassified and should conform to the format in 3 FAH-1 H-2732 Exhibit H-2732.3 and 3 FAH-1 H-2736 Exhibit H-2736.3-4.

3 FAH-1 H-2737 THROUGH H-2739 UNASSIGNED

3 FAH-1 H-2732 Exhibit H-2732.3
CATEGORY A AND B LANGUAGES

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)

Category A

Afrikaans	Italian	Spanish
Danish	Lingala	
Dutch	Swedish	
French	Norwegian	
Haitian Creole	Portuguese	
German	Romanian	

Category B

Albanian	Greek	Polish
Amharic	Hebrew	Russian
Arabic	Hindi	Serbian
Armenian	Hungarian	Sinhala
Azerbaijani	Icelandic	Slovak
Belarusian	Indonesian	Slovenian
Bengali	Japanese	Somali
Bulgarian	Kazakh	Swahili
Burmese	Korean	Tagalog
Cambodian (Khmer)	Kyrgyz	Tajiki
Chinese (Cantonese)	Lao	Tamil
Chinese (Mandarin)	Latvian	Thai
Croatian	Lithuanian	Turkish
Czech	Malay	Turkmen
Dari	Moldavian	Ukrainian
Estonian	Mongolian	Urdu
Farsi	Nepali	Uzbek
Finnish	Pashto	Vietnamese
Georgian	Persian	Visayan

(NOTE: For USAID see the Mandatory Reference for ADS 458.)

3 FAH-1 H-2733 Exhibit H-2733.2
INCENTIVE LANGUAGES

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)

Incentive languages are offered at M/FSI each year as a function of anticipated vacancies.

For USAID, primary and primary-alternate languages of the country of assignment (excluding Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Italian), the designated incentive languages are listed under the mandatory Reference of ADS Chapter.

Incentive Languages

Albanian	Kyrgyz
Amharic	Lao
Arabic	Latvian
Armenian	Lithuanian
Azerbaijani	Mongolian
Bengali	Macedonian
Bosnian	Nepali
Bulgarian	Pashto
Burmese	Polish
Chinese (Cantonese)	Russian
Chinese (Mandarin)	Serbian
Croatian	Sinhala
Czech	Slovak
Dari	Slovenian
Estonian	Tagalog
Farsi	Tajik
Georgian	Tamil
Greek	Thai
Hebrew	Turkish
Hindi	Turkmen
Hungarian	Ukrainian
Japanese	Urdu
Kazakh	Uzbek
Khmer	Vietnamese
Korean	Visayan

This data is current as of May 1999; the incentive language list is subject to change. Updates may be issued via a Department notice or other distribution prior to publication in the 3 FAH-1.

3 FAH-1 H-2736 Exhibit H-2736.3-4
REPORT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE AT POST

(TL:POH-083;   07-03-2002)

UNCLASSIFED

TO: SECSTATE WASHDC

PER CHANNEL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: APER

SUBJECT: REPORT ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCY AT MISSIONS

REFERENCE: 3 FAH-1 H-2736

1. COMPETENCY IN (NAME OF LANGUAGE) M/FSI TESTED: S- /R- LEVEL

SELF-APPRAISED: S- /R- LEVEL

CHIEF OF MISSION:

DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION:

PRINCIPAL STATE DEPARTMENT
    OFFICERS (BY TITLE):

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF OTHER
    AGENCIES (BY TITLE):

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF CONSTITUENT
    POSTS (BY POST):

2. COMMENTS, RECOMMENDATIONS, REMARKS:

UNCLASSIFIED